



# THE HORSE SHOW REVIEW

*The Voice of the Horse Show Exhibitor*

\$3.00

JULY/AUGUST 2010

VOL. VIII, No. 1

## A Conversation with Hap Hansen

*The show jumping icon opens up about talent, show nerves, and his game plan for tough Grand Prix courses*

by Penny Cox

It's Saturday night, and from the bleachers, the jumps don't look that big. But suddenly you're invited down on to the field to see how big they really are.

It's those five-foot jumps with the oxers five to six feet apart that take your breath away. And there's the glare from the overhead lights on the water jump that makes it look like the sun.

The course looks tight and hard. You look around and see the best in their field walking the course with heads down, pacing out distances and going over the strategies for competition.

Do you suppose the \$100,000+ purse makes a difference? Is it the money? Then there's the mount and how sound your horse is. What is the

**"[Hap] rides very simply and naturally, nothing is made complicated."**

*George Morris,  
USEF Show Jumping chef d'equipe*

horse going to think of that water jump with the reflection? Does your mind go in all these directions?

You're a winner and have won many times before, now you just need one perfect round! You'll have courage enough for both of you going over the water jump...it's that triple now you're thinking about. Most of us have never faced the thrill of this type of competition.

Recently I had the privilege of

talking with Hap Hansen and asking him how he became a jumper Grand Prix rider. What does it take and how do you do it? Is it innate? Can you learn it? Is it the horse and the rider combination that's perfect? What exactly?

Hap Hansen has traveled the course of a Grand Prix rider for years, and through his eyes, talent and gifts, has offered some insights. Hap is a world class act! Right down to his world class name.

You sense an aura of greatness just sitting with him. He's gentle, but you know that he is also a tough and formidable competitor.

Hap, how do you do it? When I asked him, he started off with a smile and a twinkle of those light blue eyes of his. He has a kindness that shows a true heart and that of a gentleman. He laughed.

"Twenty years ago I had two great horses that I wanted to take to the Olympics, so I went back east to stable with George Morris at Hunterdon, New Jersey. Back then, just as it is today, getting into the Olympic Trials was very complicated with many elements."

Hap continued, "I'd been at Hunterdon for three months working through the trials for the Olympics. I'd been riding all morning. I went in, cleaned and showered, and was done riding for the day. As I walked by the arena, George was giving an amateur rider a jumping lesson. There seemed to be some difficulties with how the lesson was going."

George had been to the Olympics before, and had done very well for



Photo: Quince Tree Photography

*Hap Hansen with Pikadero*

America. He was at the top of his game and was sought after for his ability to make great riders.

Hap recalls "George stopped the lesson as I walked by the arena and asked his student to get off her horse, which she did. Next he asked me to get on the horse. I was a little resistant, but did what George asked me to, but at this point I was in blue jeans and tennis shoes.

*Continued on page 4*

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# Happy Anniversary to The Horse Show Review !

*Why yes. Yes, we are. We're wishing ourselves a Happy 7th Anniversary. Time has gone by so quickly since our first issue in 2003. We've met wonderful people along the way - from the staff at Fed Ex Kinko's in downtown La Jolla, to USEF judges and stewards, show staff, exhibitors, trainers, and fellow equestrians. Yes, even the crew at Kinko's reads the HSR.*

*So many of you have had a hand in this publication with your encouragement and feedback, which are always so appreciated. Thank you to all of you. And thank you to the over 2,000 people who have voluntarily filled out our show surveys and gave their honest opinion. Without you, we're nothing (or at least not as entertaining).*

*As you can see below, the HSR has an extra large "Thank You" box for this issue. Welcome to our new subscribers, and thank you to our long time supporters !*

## The Horse Show Review Thanks You !

*Chelsea Carlson, California  
Penny Cox, California  
Sandy Eggert, California  
Barbara Filipelli, New York  
Hap Hansen, California  
Dana Iverson, California  
Caren Brown Kelly, California  
Caron Levine, California  
Joy McNally, California  
Liz Peckham Place, California  
Amy vanBuskirk, California  
United Pegasus Foundation, California  
Sue Wilson, California*

## Recently Rated Horse Shows

will return in our next issue.

## In The Other Ear...

**Happy Birthday:** to John Quirk. He celebrated his 90th with his wife, hunter trainer Tish Quirk, at a San Diego Chargers game, August 14. John is a former part-owner of the team, and was honored with birthday wishes from the Chargers on the Jumbotron scoreboard at Qualcomm Stadium. Among his very long list of accomplishments: he was the creative force behind bringing the World Cup show jumping finals to the U.S. for the first time in 1992.

**Main Attraction:** Pairing concerts and horse shows is now very hip. Country music star Lyle Lovett performed in Saratoga (CA) during Reining by the Bay in July. And rock 'n'roll icon John Fogarty is scheduled to play right after the Pfizer \$1 Million Grand Prix at the HITS hunter/jumper show in Saugerties (NY) September 12.

**That's Show Biz:** Four entertainment acts have abruptly pulled out of performing at the World Equestrian Games in Lexington (KY), just weeks before they were set to take the stage. The country music performers are protesting Alliance Coal, one of the main sponsors of the WEG. The conflict stems from the artists' strong ties to Appalachia's mining communities, and the company's politics.

**More Games:** Lexington area hotels have dropped their room rates as demand for accommodations at the WEG was less than expected. Many say it was the high hotel rates that hurt ticket sales. Good news is the new lower rates have sparked an interest in going after all.

**Welcome Back:** To western trainer Vicki Halsey of the Southwest Pinto Horse organization. Vicky has been away from the show scene while battling health issues.

**People's Court:** Former dressage world champion Anky van Grunsven is suing a Belgian journalist over the use of a photo that resembles her with her horse, *Salinero*. The photo accompanied an article about the FEI's discussion on a controversial, chin-to-chest training technique. The specific method of overflexion has since been banned, and Ms. van Grunsven wants to be as far away from the fray as possible. The curious part is that Ms. van Grunsven and her riding coach husband developed and used this training practice, and for the longest time, defended it as not harmful to horses. Their day in court is set for early September.

**Brilliant:** Here's a creative fundraising idea that comes from an eventing competition. For a \$15 donation, spectators can walk the cross country course alongside top international riders and learn how they'll ride the track and plan their strategy for the most difficult obstacles. A "Course Walk with the Stars" benefits the United Kingdom's Macmillan Cancer Support.

**Sky Box:** Exhibitors and trainers can now watch the U.S. Arabian Nationals from six new private suites overlooking the main competition arena. But buyer beware, after you pay the \$5,500 price tag, you'll need to arrange for your own furniture, liquor, and food. The nationals are held each October in Tulsa (OK).

**Whatever Happened To:** Alan Balch? The former president of the American Horse Shows Association (now USEF) and executive secretary to the American Saddle Horse Association has a new job: executive director of the California Thoroughbred Trainers, a racing industry organization. The post returns Alan to Santa Anita racetrack where he once served as vice president of marketing for the Los Angeles Turf Club.

**Oh Daddy:** The lovely dark filly with white socks was having a good show day and won a few classes for her owner. But after she was awarded the blue in the futurity, it was discovered that she wasn't eligible for the class, and her proud owner was asked to return the prize that day. It seems that unbeknownst to the owner, her pretty filly's well known and heavily advertised sire wasn't current on his futurity membership dues.

**Grateful:** "My horse is very special. I was lucky to have the owners get a horse like that. I've always loved him, and he makes me look like I know what I'm doing." *Reiner Tom McCutcheon, on the stallion Gunners Special Nite, after winning the Reserve National Open Reining Championship.*

## Hap Hansen

*Continued from page 1*

George gave me the course, and without another thought, the horse jumped it perfectly and we went back to stand in the middle of the ring with George and his student.”

Now George asked his student what the difference was between her riding and Hap’s. She talked rapidly for two or three minutes saying Hap held his hands this way and kept his leg here and found his distances here and there. George was quick to correct her. “NO ! Hap has *talent*.”

Immediately after telling me this story, Hap, the gentleman that he is, seemed to be humbled for that. He told me that it’s not something you can learn; in his years of experience, you either have it or you don’t.

Hap didn’t say this to offend, but just as a matter of fact. Hap believes that riders can always improve, but there is a certain “talent” needed to reach the top of the any field. Becoming a Grand Prix rider and successfully competing at that level is no different. You might call what Hap has a “gift”, and he has certainly taken advantage of his.

George Morris would later describe Hap’s talent in his 1993 book The American Jumping Style. “Hap Hansen rides simply beautifully. He also rides very simply and naturally, nothing is made complicated. Horses jump particularly well for him, even on short acquaintance. He combines strength and power with softness and finesse.”

Hap’s first trainer was Jimmy Williams in Flintridge, California. “I went to Jimmy Williams when I was about ten years old,” he said. “I was fortunate enough to have parents who did what Jimmy asked. My parents didn’t buy me a string of horses, but I had nice horses. Plus Jimmy would give me extra horses to ride.”

Hap was a good student and as he was going through his junior ranks, both Jimmy and Marci Williams shared in his training. Hap grew up at the same time as renowned rider Susie Hutchinson, and as we know, Jimmy also provided us with some other great riders, like two-time Olympian Robert Ridland, who was just a little bit ahead of Hap.

I asked Hap what his secret was. With

another smile, he replied, “Hard work, talent, nice horses, great trainers in both Jimmy and Marci. All these things helped to make me the rider I am today. ‘Mousie’, as we nicknamed Marci, and Jimmy, gave me a great start and a bunch of nice horses to ride.”



*Jimmy Williams*

that age, I was riding every day after school.” But at that point, he did not believe he was being groomed for the Olympics.

He got his first job at 19 after he had been a junior amateur rider. “I took over a string of about six to eight jumper horses at Bonita Valley Farms in Chula Vista, and that’s where I also started riding saddle horses,” he said.

When asked about what he remembers from back then, he said that he admired George Morris, but that the respected trainer was far away on the east coast.

At the time, Hap didn’t have the opportunity to go back east to meet and train with George. You can tell by talking with Hap that his mentor was Jimmy Williams, who felt Hap was a talented and gifted rider.

Currently Hap has a training facility at the historic Rancho Osuna, in Rancho Santa Fe, California. “Rancho”, as the community is called, ranks third in the nation for expensive homes and land. In this beautiful spot, Hap has an arena and barn with quite a few horses in training, along with adult amateur and junior riders.

His work ethic is legendary, and when you talk with him or his professional staff, the dedication and attention to the clients and horses are hard to match at any barn.

Of course I wanted to know what happened at the Olympics that year he moved east to train at Morris’ Hunter-

I wanted to know if Hap was a natural athlete. “I didn’t do too many other sports. I was pretty good at tennis. I didn’t give baseball much of a chance, and once I got to

don. “The Olympic committee named the team and I was positioned second in reserve.”

When asked if he would do it again, the 57 year old laughed and said, “Well I’m not getting any younger, but if I had the right horse, yes, I would.”

He also said that his main reason for giving the Olympics another go would be to ride for and serve his country, not for the mere glory of being able to say he rode in the Olympic Games.

Next Hap offered his thoughts on the experience of first entering the Grand Prix arena, and provided some tips.

When competing, he prefers the middle to three quarters of the way through the lineup so he can watch the other competitors.

After he has walks the course, he keeps going over the jumps in his head so that they’re embedded in his mind before he ever enters the ring on his horse. Then he looks for the steady four strides or long five, and strategies for a difficult section.

Once the class begins, now all he has to do is concentrate on regulating the horse with precision to gain the right distance between jumps.

He believes that the actual track and what you go over at that point should be second nature, especially since riders only have 45 seconds to complete the course.

Hap laughs when I ask him if he does anything to relax before a class, or does he prefer to have the adrenaline rushing? I want to know if he has to ask himself to calm down.

“Yeah, I keep telling myself I can do it, but I do get nervous, as I think most people do. It wouldn’t be as competitive if it wasn’t like that. I think I heard [show jumping champion] Joe Fargis say that if you didn’t have the nerves, you wouldn’t have the adrenaline push. You have to try not to let it bother you and keep it under control.”

I ask Hap about courage and commitment. “It all depends on the horse you are sitting on, because you can ride a couple of bad ones and you can lose your courage really easily. You can get riding too defensively. It’s awfully nice when you do find a nice horse.” ★

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## Show Dogs

### Maddie



Darling Maddie is an English Bulldog puppy and is pictured here enjoying her very first horse show. She's 12 weeks old and weighs about 21 pounds.

Maddie belongs to Chelsea Carlson, a trainer at River Valley Ranch in Imperial Beach, California. Chelsea got her when she saw the cute pup at a friend's house, and just had to have her.

Maddie is a wonderful barn dog because she sleeps 85% of the time. She's very friendly and affectionate, and her personality is "very silly". She's especially happy when she wakes up in the morning after a long snooze.

For now, her favorite toys are tennis balls and anything spikey, and she likes to bark at a certain bathroom drain in the house.

At home, Maddie is looked after by her auntie Emma, a ten year old Boxer, who helps to raise her and teach her doggie stuff.

# SHOWGROUNDS

## Blair Castle



Photo courtesy of Blair Castle

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Pitlochry, Perthshire, Scotland

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[www.blairhorsetrials.co.uk](http://www.blairhorsetrials.co.uk)

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**Hotels:**

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Blair Castle (private home open to public),  
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## What's cooking ?

Joy McNally of Pony Expresso Café has fed many horse show exhibitors at a variety of shows, so we asked her what everyone's eating these days.

### **Arabian exhibitors**

They like healthy food.

### **Dressage**

Very healthy. Then they'll sneak up and order french-fries when no one is around.

### **Hunter/Jumper**

They eat anything. Mostly healthy. One rider brings his own brown rice, and we add what he wants.

### **Western**

Hamburgers and fries.  
They're laid back. They have jeweled shirts and big earrings.

### **And the most unusual order...**

A toasted bagel with the inside scooped out!



## Meet The Show Staff

### Joy McNally



Café owner Joy McNally (back row, far right) with her staff

Although Pony Expresso had humble beginnings, it's now permanently on site at three large showgrounds in southern California: Del Mar Horsepark, Del Mar Fairgrounds, and Rancho Mission Viejo. Owner Joy McNally took over the reins after her mother Margaret Sears, the founder, passed away.

### **How did Pony Expresso begin ?**

*17 years ago my sister, a trainer, said there was nowhere to get good coffee at horse shows. So my mother started with a food cart and umbrella, followed the show circuit, and it grew and grew, and soon it was breakfast and lunch. I'd come and help my mom, and now its my life - complicated and busy.*

### **Has your staff been with you a long time ?**

*My mom has the most amazing staff. They're like family - they take care of me. The cooks have worked here 10 years, Christy [caterer] has worked 10 years, and Nathan [cashier] five years.*

### **What do you like best about the business ?**

*Making exhibitors happy. They can order the most random thing, and we'll try to make it work. Every order is a custom order. We build your sandwich or salad..  
From buffalo burgers to Brie.*

### **Any advice for exhibitors ?**

*(her staff, eavesdropping, answered in unison)  
Be ready when you order !*

### **If you could do anything...?**

*I would travel with my kids.  
Start in South America and go east.*

### **Best advice you've ever received ?**

*My mom always said, "It'll be fine."  
It was always true.*

## Letters to HSR

Dear HSR:

I received my first issue of the *Horse Show Review* as a gift from a friend and was impressed with the informative, helpful information in the issue.

As a relatively new horse aficionado and new equine addict, I was excited to read in detail about the behind the scenes and what goes on with the World Equestrian Games. As a future attendee, I will have a greater appreciation for how all the horses were transported and what they go through just to be there.

I also appreciated the letter and correspondence re: the Del Mar Nationals competition as a competitor for the first time this year. Thank you for your "horsey" insight and I look forward to my future reviews.

*Dana Iverson*

*La Jolla, California*

**Letters to HSR** may be sent to [SR@exhibitorfriendly.com](mailto:SR@exhibitorfriendly.com).  
and maybe edited for length.



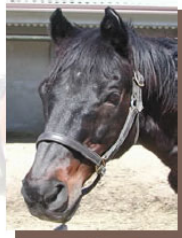
## *Where's The Show ?*

**ExhibitorFriendly.com**  
has over 75 show facilities listed  
on our **Showgrounds** page.

You'll find  
**Location      Contact Info**  
**Stabling details      Airport info**

*If you don't see it, we'll add it.*

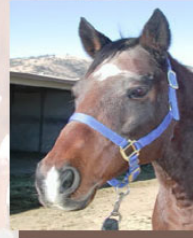
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together they earned over 2 million dollars.  
*Did you ?*



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*Silver Supris at Earl Warren*

# Home Away from Home

How big are the stalls ?

*Stall dimensions are as published in prize lists, or by showgrounds.  
USEF has no minimum size requirement; recommends no smaller than 9' x 9'*

## **Del Mar Fairgrounds**

*Del Mar, California*

12' x 12'

permanent

## **Del Mar Horsepark**

*Del Mar, California*

*per Jingle Bell Horse Show (Saddlebred, Friesian)*

10' x 10'

not specified

## **Earl Warren Showgrounds**

*Santa Barbara, California*

*per Santa Barbara National Amateur Horse Show*

10' x 10'

permanent

## **Horse Park at Woodside**

*Woodside, California*

*per Reining By the Bay (reining)*

*per Cornerstone Event Management (dressage)*

*per Langer Equestrian Group (hunter/jumper)*

12' x 12'

temporary

10' x 10'

temporary

9'6" x 9'6"

temporary

## **Los Angeles Equestrian Center**

*Burbank, California*

*per Cornerstone Event Management (dressage)*

*per Langer Equestrian Group (hunter/jumper)*

*per Langer Equestrian Group (hunter/jumper)*

12' x 12'

permanent

10' x 10'

permanent

9'6" x 9'6"

temporary

## **Murieta Equestrian Center**

*Rancho Murieta, California*

*per Northern Winter Classic (hunter/jumper)*

10' x 10'

permanent and  
temporary

## **Rancho Mission Viejo Riding Park**

*San Juan Capistrano, California*

*per Blenheim Equisports (hunter/jumper)*

10' x 10'

permanent

## **Starr Vaughn Equestrian Center**

*Elk Grove, California*

*Per Golden State Dressage, Inc.*

12' x 12'

permanent

10' x 10'

temporary

# International News

## European Quarter Horse Championships

Best in Europe compete in 21st annual event

A robust turnout of over 400 Quarter Horses marked the continued success of the European Quarter Horse Championships held August 14 - 22 in Kreuth, Germany.

Four AQHA shows were held concurrently, offering Open, Amateur, Select and Youth divisions. For the first time, European Championships were awarded in the Halter division. Championship trophy buckles were given in all divisions.

The popular Trail Horse division saw more than 40 horses in the Senior class. Courses were designed by Ann Dennis, who was the 2009 Pacific Coast Quarter Horse Association Trail Course Designer of the Year.

Riders from throughout Europe recognize the top level of competition found at the championships. Countries represented included Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Poland and Sweden, among others.

The Federation of European Quarter Horse Associations oversees the event. Exhibitors must be a member of FEQHA and the American Quarter Horse Association. Horses are registered with the AQHA, and owners must reside in Europe.



## 2012 Olympics - London

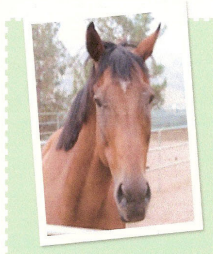
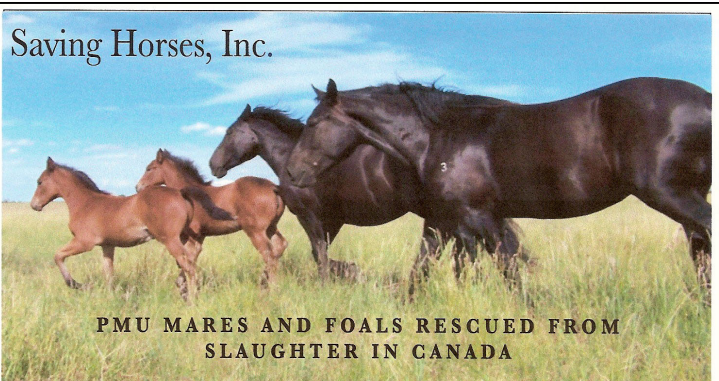
### Preparations begin at Greenwich Park

Promising that the venerable municipal park will remain open and accessible to locals and tourists while work is underway, the London Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) has started to transform the greens and woodlands into a premier Olympic equestrian venue.

Preliminary work began in early August to soften the ground and stimulate healthy grass to grow along the designated tracks to be used for eventing's cross country phase. The goal is to have the footing at least as good as at Burghley, site of many of the U.K.'s elite international eventing competitions.

Other works will include the leveling of minor depressions in the ground using topsoil and turf, and re-seeding areas where grass cover is poor.

A test event will be held in July 2011.



*Lucky Girl*  
This sweet horse was on her way to slaughter when we rescued her from a Nevada feedlot.

Saving Horses, Inc. rescues horses from slaughter, abuse, neglect, and abandonment in California. SHI also assists other rescue organizations with funding for the rescue and care of horses whose lives have been saved. SHI supports the rescue of PMU mares and foals from Canada, and the rescue of orphaned foals from the nurse mare industry. SHI also supports organizations who actively rescue thoroughbreds off the track. The racing industry is

the largest "throw away" group in the equine community. American horses are transported to a horrendous death in Mexico and Canada every week. Many horses are spared this fate if rescued at auction and from kill buyer's feedlots. Visit our website and support our efforts by donating or purchasing our beautiful notecards. For more info contact: Audrey Reynolds / President 619 445-2917 [www.savinghorsesinc.com](http://www.savinghorsesinc.com)



*Claudia*  
This young horse was left to starve alone in a field because she had a crooked leg.



*Willie*  
This emaciated 6 month old Belgian foal rescued too late.



## 2010 Youth Olympics - Singapore

### Ambitious riders meet in inaugural competition

Young equestrians representing 31 countries competed in Singapore August 14-26 at the first ever Youth Olympics. Teams were made up of different nations from each continent, giving the riders an opportunity to bond with athletes from other countries, and focus on working together for the good of their continent's team.

Thirty horses from Australia were loaned to the event, and riders selected their horses in a draw.

An ecstatic Marcelo Chirico of Uruguay, winner of the individual gold medal in show jumping, described his win. "I was so happy to win today! I never imagined I would be a Youth Olympic Games Champion! Now I am hoping one day I can be an Olympic champion, maybe in London or Rio? My horse jumped very well today. He was careful and wanted to help me. He was excellent! I would really like to say thanks to my family and my coach and everybody who has supported me here at the Youth Olympic Games."

Nanjing, China will host the next Youth Olympics 2014.



## THE HORSE SHOW REVIEW

*The Voice of the Horse Show Exhibitor*

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***Thanks !***



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*They're provided here for your enjoyment.*

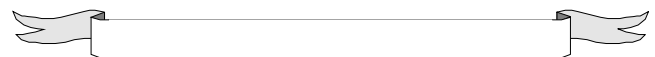
9 registered quarter horses for sale. 2 geldings, 2 studs,  
the rest mares one ready to foul at any time.

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Sheba is one nice horse. When I got her she was underferd  
at a "trail camp" where the owners keep their horses  
"so anyone can ride"! She was 4 yrs old at the time.  
She is now 9. She is not registered but because of "history"  
from a friend we believe she is 1/2 thoroughbred and 1/2  
arabian (I'll explain if you are interested)...She is not  
exactly a beginner horse. But anyone who has any experi-  
ence at all (even a month of riding) can ride her. She  
doesn't even need a "crop". Show her a crop and she  
is good to go. No pops necessary !  
If you are a "horse person" you understand all of the above.

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Beautiful mare for sale. Will go anywhere on trails. Also  
been trained to run barrels for child classes. Gentle and  
sound. Does not spook. Can fire a 12 gauge a few feet  
from her and all she does is throw her head.





# THE HORSE SHOW REVIEW

*The Voice of the Horse Show Exhibitor*

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